

## Message Text

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ACTION H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3298

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS SAIGON 2439

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: OPEN LETTER TO U.S. CODEL

DEPT PASS IMMEDIATE TO IBS/NCA

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF "AN OPEN LETTER TO U.S. LEGISLATORS IN VIETNAM" THAT WAS FRONT PAGED IN MARCH 3RD ISSUE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY, THE SAIGON POST. REQUEST DEPARTMENT TRANSMIT TO CODEL MEMBERS.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR FRIENDS,

GODSPEED AS YOU RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES AFTER A VISIT TO VIETNAM.

YOU HAVE HEARD THE PROS AND CONS ON THE NEED OF ADDITIONAL AID FOR THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AND ASSESSMENTS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION PREVAILING HERE. DOUBTLESS, IN YOUR MEETINGS WITH A CROSS SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY, YOU WERE TREATED TO DISCOURSES ON THE PROSAIC AND THE PONDEROUS. UNDOUBTEDLY, TOO, YOU MUST HAVE BEEN REGALED WITH PERORATIONS ABOUT WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT

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IS WRONG IN VIETNAM.

WE DO NOT PROPOSE TO DWELL ON THIS RIGHT OR WRONG COURSE  
CONTROVERSY. WE ARE NOT CONCERNED WITH POLITICS. WE ARE BUT  
ORDINARY PEOPLE CONCERNED WITH A FREE VIETNAM--FREE OF  
COMMUNISM AND THE TOTALITARIAN WAY OF LIFE.

ALLOW US SIMPLE CITIZENS TO AIR A FEW THOUGHTS.

WE SHALL NOT BE PRESUMPTUOUS BY DISCUSSING AMERICAN  
INTERESTS. IN TRUTH, WE DO NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT IT. WHAT WE DO  
KNOW IS THAT A LITTLE OVER A DECADE AGO, YOU COMMITTED TROOPS TO  
VIETNAM. AND FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE END OF THAT PRESENCE,  
THERE WERE NOT A FEW MISTAKES BY AMERICAN AS WELL AS VIETNAMESE.  
IT CANNOT BE DENIED THAT THE PRESENCE OF THESE AMERICAN TROOPS  
GAVE RISE TO A VERY SPECIAL SITUATION REplete WITH PROBLEMS  
WHICH IT WAS OUR LOT TO INHERIT.

WE DO NOT WANT TO ARGUE ABOUT THE MERITS OF YOUR DESIRE TO  
END INVOLVEMENT IN VIETNAM FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR OWN INTEREST  
AND, MAY WE SAY, OURS TOO.

THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE DO REALIZE THAT TO BE TRULY  
DESERVING OF FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE, THEY HAVE TO STRUGGLE  
FOR IT THEMSELVES AND NOT RELY ON OTHER PEOPLES TO DO IT FOR  
THEM.

WHAT CONCERNS US IS THE MANNER AND THE SPIRIT OF HOW THE  
AMERICAN ROLE IN VIETNAM SHALL TERMINATE. YOU WANT TO LEAVE  
AND, WE WANT YOU TO LEAVE TOO, AWARE AS WE ARE THAT AFTER LITTLE  
MORE THAN A DECADE YOU HAVE GROWN TIRED AND DECIDED YOU MUST GO.

AS A NATION RICH IN THE TRADITION OF HELPING OTHER PEOPLES  
IN SAFEGUARDING THEIR PATRIMONY AND THE RIGHT TO EXIST UNDER  
THE SUN, YOU MAY NOT FIND LEAVING EASY OR SIMPLE.

BUT THE SITUATION SPAWNED BY THE AMERICAN COMMITMENT RE-  
QUIRES THAT YOU LOOK AT THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR DECISION ON  
INVOLVEMENT REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT WAS A MISTAKE OR NOT.

IT IS SAID THAT THE VIETNAM AFFAIR IS AN OPEN-ENDED ONE,  
A BOTTOMLESS PIT. PLEASE BE ASSURED, THAT PAST EXPERIENCE HAS  
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MADE US REALIZE ONLY TOO WELL THE PAIN OF HUMILIATION AS A  
PEOPLE WHO HAVE TO KNOCK ON THE DOOR OF ANOTHER PEOPLE TO ASK  
FOR HELP.

BUT WE ARE BUOYED BY THE DETERMINATION NOT TO RELY ON  
FOREIGN ASSISTANCE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. AND THERE ARE REASONABLE  
CHANCES OF ACCOMPLISHING THIS THROUGH FOOD PRODUCTION AND THE  
BRIGHT PROSPECTS OF EXPLOITING OIL.

YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD AND WE HAVE HEARD YOUR VIEWS ABOUT OURS BEING AN UNDEMOCRATIC REGIME AND THAT VENALITY AND INJUSTICES ARE WIDESPREAD HERE. AGAIN, IN THE CAPACITY OF MERE AND SIMPLE CITIZENS, LET US STATE THAT WE HAVE MANY REASONS TO BE UNHAPPY ABOUT OUR OWN GOVERNMENT AND OFTEN ARE FRUSTRATED AND DISCOURAGED BY THE ILLS THAT PLAGUE THIS GOVERNMENT.

DESPITE SUCH UNHAPPINESS AND FRUSTRATION, HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT AND THAT THIS CAN BE DONE. THE ALTERNATIVE IS IF THE COMMUNISTS PREVAIL WE SHALL BE CAST INTO THE ABYSS OF ETERNAL DARKNESS.

LET US REITERATE THAT OUR CONCERN IS NOT REALLY THE AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL AID -- IN THE INSTANT CASE, 300 MILLION U.S. DOLLARS -- BUT THE BASIC ATTITUDE OF YOUR GOVERNMENT VIS-A-VIS OUR COUNTRY. WE ARE REALISTIC AND COGNIZANT OF THE MOOD PREVAILING IN YOUR COUNTRY ON FURTHER ASSISTANCE TO US. IF WE ARE REPETITIOUS IN OUR CONCERN AND PREOCCUPATION WITH THE BASIC U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD US, IT IS BECAUSE WE LOOK AT THE GREAT AMERICAN NATION AS IMBUED WITH THE MOST LOFTY OF IDEALS AND ALTRUISM. IN THIS CONVICTION WE DO NOT WANT TO BE DISAPPOINTED.

IN ARGUING FOR A CUTOFF OF AMERICAN ASSISTANCE EVEN IF IT ENTAILS THE COLLAPSE OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND A COMMUNIST TAKE-OVER, SOME MAY SAY IT COULDN'T BE HELPED AND THAT WE DESERVE IT.

SOMEHOW WE CONCEIVE THAT DEEP IN THE AMERICAN PSYCHE, A TORTURED VOICE WILL SAY THIS IS WRONG AND WILL CONSIGN SOUTH VIETNAMESE TO A FATE THEY DO NOT WANT NOR DESERVE.

AN ABRUPT, IF INGLORIOUS, END OF THE AMERICAN COMMITMENT IN VIETNAM IS A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE TOO DISTURBING TO  
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CONTEMPLATE.

LET US CLOSE THIS LETTER BY CITING A SIMPLE STORY ON HUMAN RELATIONS. A GENTLEMAN COMES TO A HOUSE WHERE A LADY RESIDES. THE MAN DECIDES TO STAY. AFFECTION BLOSSOMS; SHE BECOMES ENCIENTE. SHOULD HE SUDDENLY DEPART, DISMISSING ALL BY SAYING HE WAS WRONG TO HAVE ENTERED THE HOUSE IN THE FIRST PLACE? THE LADY, OF COURSE, KNEW THAT HE COULD NOT STAY FOREVER, BUT SHE IS RESIGNED TO REALITY AND DO HER BEST TO COPE WITH THE SITUATION.

BEST WISHES ALWAYS AND LOVE TO YOU FROM VIETNAM.

YOUR VIETNAMESE FRIENDS

END TEXT.  
MARTIN

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